

CLAIMS:

1. A frying apparatus for frying a food product, the apparatus comprising a container having an entry side and an exit side, and including at least one conveying device for conveying food product from the entry side through the container to the exit side, and further including at least one submerging device, the submerging device being located above the conveying device, the submerging device being adapted to be moved between an out-of-use mode in which it is in a raised position and an in-use mode in which it is in a lowered position and is operative to hold the food product down on the conveyor belt, whereby, in use, a liquid at a pre-determined elevated temperature is held in the container, the conveying device for carrying food product is located underneath the surface of the liquid, and the submerging device is in the in-use mode with the food product carried on the conveying device being held down under the surface of the liquid by the submerging device thereby preventing the food product from floating to the surface of the liquid, ensuring effective and consistent frying of the food product.
2. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein when the submerging device is in the in-use mode, the submerging device is in direct contact with the food product on the conveying device and the submerging device is substantially submerged under the surface of the liquid in the container;
3. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the submerging device is positioned directly above the conveying device, with a pre-defined distance between the submerging device and the conveying device, said distance being determined by the thickness of the product being conveyed through the liquid within the container.
4. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the container includes a temperature control device so that in use, temperature of the liquid in the container can be controlled.

5. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the container includes a plurality of frying bath sections, each section including a conveying device and a corresponding submerging device.

5 6. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein each submerging device comprises a travelling belt and the speed at which the belt is travelling can be varied to match that of the conveying device.

10 7. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 5, further including a food product transferring device for transferring the product from a first conveying device in a first section of the container to a second conveying device in a second section of the container, the food product transferring device preferably including a rotatable shaft having a plurality of vanes fixedly mounted thereon, the vanes being adapted for receiving food product emerging from the first conveying device and transferring said food product to the 15 second conveying device by rotation of the transferring device such that product emerging from the first conveying device is received onto a vane and carried on the vane, through an arcuate path until the product falls from the vane onto the second conveying device.

20 8. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the vanes have a flat surface for receiving a food product and are arranged equi-distant from each other about the shaft.

25 9. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the food product transferring device is moveable between two alternative positions, a first position in which the product is flipped upside down through a 180° angle as the product is transferred from one section to another section; and a second position in which the product is conveyed from one section to another section without being flipped through a 180° angle.

30 10. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the food product transferring device is moveable between the first and second positions by movement in a slot provided in a guide member.

11. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the food product transferring device is in its first position when the transferring device is in an upper position in the slot and is in its second position when in a lower position in the slot.
- 5 12. A frying apparatus as claimed in Claim 5, wherein the temperature in any section of the container is controlled independently of the temperature in any other section, thereby enabling the product to be conveyed through a plurality of temperatures as may be required by the cooking process.